Too many individuals in our region lack the resources to meet their most basic needs or access to safe spaces to rebuild their lives. Affordable housing shortages, high unemployment/underemployment and situations of domestic violence all contribute to this struggle for stability. United Way supports agencies and programs that help individuals and families dealing with food insecurity, difficulty finding long-term affordable housing and legal assistance needs.

THE CHALLENGE

730,000 RESIDENTS

41,000+ ADULTS

in Cook and DuPage counties are food insecure. Defined as inconsistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life.

19,479 STUDENTS were identified as homeless by Chicago Public Schools (CPS) during the 2016–2017 school year.

In DuPage, children under 18 made up 35% of the homeless population in 2016. In Cook County it was 28%.

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were victims of domestic violence in Illinois in 2017.

8,000 child witnesses of this domestic violence sought services.

THE GOAL

Meeting the basic needs of those who need it most.

Strong communities feature high-quality organizations that work collaboratively to ensure that basic needs are met so that people can find safe spaces and plan for the future.

WHAT WE’RE DOING

In our experience, no single agency or program can help guide people from crisis to stability. Our role as funder and coordinator allows us to provide a network of services that stabilizes families and connects them to other programs that can advance their lives.

To achieve our goal, we are focused on the following strategies:

**HOUSING**
Ensure basic housing needs are met by sourcing temporary and long-term housing options for families.

**SAFETY FROM ABUSE**
Address immediate safety needs through interventional services and programs.

**FOOD ACCESS**
Meet basic food needs by linking families to supplemental food sources and federal benefits.

**LEGAL ASSISTANCE**
Ensure equal access to justice by connecting families to pro-bono legal services.

OUR IMPACT

23,275 people were provided with safety services to prevent abuse and violence*

97,935 people were provided with housing*

24,864 people were provided with legal assistance*

394,725 people were provided with meals*

*between July 2016 and June 2017
As the largest private funder of social services in the region, United Way fights for the health, education, financial stability and safety of every person in every Chicago region neighborhood.

333 S. Wabash Avenue, 30th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604

COLLABORATIONS

Success and Stability Program

United Way of Metro Chicago has partnered with the Siemer Institute for the Success and Stability Program in Brighton Park, Auburn Gresham and West Chicago. This initiative helps 250 families with school-age children who are homeless/at risk of becoming homeless to get housed, become financially stable and improve the children’s academic performance.

These vetted, best-in-class agencies provide quality basic needs services and crisis support to residents in need. Through these programs and partnerships, we have made steady progress toward our goal. View a full list of our agency partners online at LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/Our-Partners.

Safeguards and Basic Needs Progress Highlights in our Neighborhood Networks include:

- In South Chicago, training sessions for First Responders were held to teach residents how to provide help and support until police and paramedics arrive after incidents of violence.
- The Blue Island/Robbins Neighborhood Network partnered with the Greater Chicago Food Depository to open two food pantries in Blue Island, with plans for additional pantries in Robbins and summer meal sites.

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YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Food, shelter and safety are the basic needs people must have to be productive in our society. Families and individuals can’t focus on their financial or academic future unless they feel safe and these basic needs are met. We focus on education, income, health and basic needs strategies to address interconnected challenges and ensure that our community members have the support they need to thrive.

Donate online at LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/DONATE

Learn how to get involved at LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/VOLUNTEER

United Way of Metro Chicago